

# **2002 BLM Exclusive Use Helicopter Manager Workshop Meeting Notes**

11/12/02 Reno NV

## **Keynote, Lynn Findley, NAO Group Manager**

- Excellent safety record this year, increased flight time, 0 accidents
- Realized the benefits of increased crew size, BLM provided significant numbers of CWN support personnel to large fire support
- Continuing Resolution is slowing down the contracting process
- Currently around 1.9 million short for 2003 due to increased costs, may need to shuffle or eliminate contracts to make up the difference
- Budget will not allow for continuing to increase numbers of contracts or upgrade platforms on existing contracts
- 04 budget and beyond will be different in that the constraints of uncontrollable costs (i.e. cost of living increases) will be included in funding
- Blue Ribbon Panel report due out 12/9. Could impact how we have traditionally done business with large airtankers. May need to look at shuffling current aircraft to fill in the gaps
- Average age of Large Airtanker aircraft is 48.6 years, no new platforms currently available
- Fate of non-gum thickened retardant still un-decided
- SEAT program continues to grow
- MAFFS tanks systems are antiquated, two systems failures this year, the replacement process (AFFS) is not very timely
- The new National Aviation Plan is approved and posted on the web
- Issued IM regarding change of aviation training and importance of conducting entry level and recurrence training at the local level
- Exclusive –Use Position Descriptions have been updated, old PD's will be abolished
- Mentoring Program considered a success and will continue
- Need to continue developing the CWN program and supporting the CWN program with Exclusive Use personnel
- The need for upgraded platforms must be supported in the Fire Management Plan
- Facilities will continue to be upgraded, need to look at multiuse (Airbase) potential
- Continued training is critical for employee development, should not be the first thing compromised by flat budget

## **Year End Statistics, Brad Gibbs, Helicopter Operations Specialist (HOS)**

- Handed out the data submitted by each base
- Standard format was needed to ease the data collection/dissemination process required by the National Aviation Office (NAO)

### **Action Items**

- Brad will do a final tweak to the format and re-send with directions to assure all 02 data is consistent
- Foreman to submit to Brad their spreadsheet examples to try to get a standard format for tracking contract helicopter use, Brad will send draft out for acceptance
- Foreman agreed to submit 2000/2001 data on standard format, Brad will send e-mail request for the information and deadline

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### **Redbook Helitack Training & Experience Requirements Review, Kevin Hamilton, Helicopter Program Manager**

- Need to look at the pre-requisite training and qualification requirements for the Exclusive-Use personnel, some edits needed for the Redbook update
- The group came to consensus on the Helitack Supervisor being fully qualified as HEB2, and the Assistant needing to be a HEB2(T)
- The Assistant can still function as the "Acting Supervisor" to cover days off without being a fully qualified HEB2
- For initial hiring purposes an exemption to the pre-requisites can be granted through a request to the NAO for hiring personnel on a case-by-case basis
- USFS wants to allow two seasons as a HCWN sufficient experience to qualify as HELB, BLM does not support this and will continue to require experience on an exclusive-use crew
- The currency requirements were added to the Redbook. RT-371 is the bi-annual workshop. S-217 refresher syllabus included in the new S-271 training package. Procurement/COR/PI training is provided through the ACE process

### **Helibase Facilities, Terry O'Connel, Fire Operations**

- The five year deferred maintenance program process has been completed for fiscal years 04-08. There will be a call letter sent out in December for projects to be considered for 2009. Any questions, call Terry at (208) 387-5883
- Talked about the process from identifying need through turnkey
- Each State has a Facilities point of contact, State Aviation Managers (SAM) need to engage with their State Facilities Manager to facilitate breaking ground
- Need to take a hard look at opportunities for combining air operations (Airbase) facilities
- The Secretary of the Interior must approve building a BLM facility on leased land
- Program should consider putting a working group together to come up with standard helibase plans.

#### **Action Items**

- Helibase Facilities Working Group was created members are as follows:
  - Clay Hillin, Oregon/Washington SAM
  - Mickey Smith, MOAB Supervisor
  - Chad Johnson, Rifle Supervisor
  - Clark Hammond, Lakeview Assistant
  - John Keesee, Apple Valley Assistant

### **Helibase Directory, Brad Gibbs, HOS**

- Do we use/need it, yes. Will continue to publish & distribute hardcopy, will post on new NAO web

#### **Action Items**

- Brad will add a few fields for additional information to the form and submit to each base for reply due 04/01/03

### **Adjourn for the day**

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## **Integrating Airspace Operations, Steve Hubbard, CDF**

- Presentation of 3D model of airspace and aerial supervision requirements involved in a complex airspace and how to mix and utilize helicopters
- Presentation of Aircraft strategy and tactics Power Point
- Presentation of Bus Incident Mid-Air Collision Power Point

### **Action Items**

- Brad will e-mail Aircraft strategy and tactics Power Point to all

## **Equipment Update, Brad in lieu of Tim Lynch**

- Looked at new tuna net for evaluation b Cache and MTDC and solicited feedback on the design
- Talked about the approval and availability of the Petzel harness for use in doors off operations

### **Action Items**

- Brad will e-mail to all the process and form needed to request equipment from MTDC

## **Safecom Summary, Larry Mahaffey, Aviation Safety & Training Program Manager**

- BLM use 02: 48 m. spent on 31000+flight hrs by the Bureau, provided a lot of help to cooperators
- Safecom data will be combined into one system after integration problems resolved
- 2002 DOI Safecom numbered 520 of which 199 were BLM, 52 for the Exclusive –Use helicopters
- 2002 average of 1 Safecom for every 160 flight hours
- Continue good Risk Management practices, what is the Risk? Planning is the key to mission safety. You can delegate the authority but not the responsibility/accountability
- Risk Management controls include our policy, briefing/de-briefing, training, tail-gate safety, Safecom
- Spoke to the accident investigation process to include the HEMG role of preserving the scene, collecting statements, pictures and records
- Introduced IAMS and conducted demo

### **Action Items**

- Larry will continue to distribute frequency guides

## **NPS Helicopter Training Academy, Sean Cox, Grand Canyon Helitack**

- Sean presented a power point presentation on the NPS Training detail that provides opportunity for completion of HCWN, HELB and HECM task books on a focused, structured and challenging program with diverse missions and unique aircraft. Detail lasts for two weeks with two trainees per session, home unit incurs all costs. Nominations accepted on NWCG nom form, slots available all year round
- NPS working on funding lodging for participants to encourage nominations
- Kevin Hamilton led a discussion on the merits of combined training to include S-271 and CRM, may involve coming on early to ensure pilot participation. Encouraged each base/State/Geographic Area to look for opportunities to combine training

## **Performance Planning, Kevin Hamilton, Helicopter Program Manager**

- Why re-Review? Continue to have problems with the performance planning aspects, particularly with type 3 helicopters with area B charts which make up over 1/2 of our exclusive use fleet
- Review of FAA AC 61-1313, FAA AC 90-95, Chapter 7 IHOG and Bell L III Flight Manual
- Pilots are responsible for load planning but we must verify and sign the load calculations
- Performance charts can be interpreted differently by other pilots
- Looking at the legalization of cheat sheet look-up tables and electronic load calcs
- If destination is higher/hotter than load calc allows for we need to be landing at a lower elevation within the load calc parameters to prepare one for actual conditions
- Need to utilize hover power checks prior to landing

## **Adjourn for the day**

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11/14

## **Contracting Update, Harlan Johnson, OAS Contracting Officer**

- Under the continuing resolution contract renewals will be processed, new contracts will be solicited but will probably not be awarded until sometime in January
- Important to review your solicitations so changes can be made before the solicitation hits the street. The solicitations are available on the OAS website and at fedbisops. Amendments can occur prior to award, modifications are done after award
- Last three years flight hours are averaged to provide estimated flight hours for bidding purposes, this cost is included in best value process along with availability bid
- Best Value selection process: CO looks through offers to make sure the bids are acceptable, can they meet the basics in the contract. Tech Services does a go/no-go on each offer based on the aircraft meeting minimum performance specifications and ranks based on past performance and experience and aircraft performance. CO then verifies Tech Services evaluation and consolidates ranking criteria for the final rating process used for selection
- Contract Evaluation: Very important that these documents are completed correctly and honestly to establish past performance, they play a large part in the award process. Issues should be dealt with as they occur and not just at the end of the contract. Must give the contractor an opportunity to improve, use daily diaries for documentation

## **Bin Item Discussion, All**

- Brad spoke to the Working group that is working on Fixed Weight Reduction and helicopter typing
- Touched on the Chapter 12 Redbook update
- Introduced the NAO Airspace website
- Update on the Fireline Leadership for BLM Exclusive Use Helicopter Managers course being sponsored by the NAO in Boise the week of March 24<sup>th</sup>
- Discussion on the process for a new Rappel Base Start-up
- Update on aerial ignition, IM coming soon with retrofit needed for existing equipment and certification procedure
- Solicited input for "Radio Equipment" survey
- Listed known meeting dates:
- 3/4-6 HEMG Workshop, Durango CO
- 3/17-21 S-372, Salt Lake UT
- 3/24-28 HEMG Workshop, Salt Lake UT
- 3/24-28 S-370 Moab UT
- 5/5 HEMG Workshop, Idaho Falls ID

## **Action Items**

- Kevin will check into aerial ignition equipment purchases, fuels vs. fire dollars

## **Adjourn Meeting**